

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8038
INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO
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C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 2762

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ELAB, PINT, EC
SUBJECT: POSSIBLE AIFLD/CEOSL BREAK FEARED

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: THE ECUADOREAN CONFEDERATION OF FREE LABOR ORGANIZATIONS, CEOSL, HAS RECENTLY INCREASED THE SCOPE OF ITS PARTICIPATION WITH THE COMMUNIST CTE AND MARXIST CEDOC LABOR CONFEDERATIONS. THIS DERIVES FROM A COMPLEX SITUATION, BUT A CONTINUATION OF SUCH ACTIVITY, IN THE ABSENCE OF A STRONG AND PUBLIC DEMOCRATIC SELF-IDENTIFICATION ON CEOSL'S PART, IMPERILS CONTINUED AIFLD (AMERICAN INSTITUTE FOR FREE LABOR DEVELOPMENT) SUPPORT OF THAT ORGANIZATION. END SUMMARY.

2. ALTHOUGH IN DECEMBER, 1977, THE DEMOCRATIC (ORIT-AFFILIATED) CEOSL FORMALLY BROKE OFF JOINT ACTIVITIES (UNITY MOVEMENT) WITH THE COMMUNIST CTE AND MARXIST CEDOC LABOR CONFEDERATIONS, SEVERAL MANIFESTOS, SIGNED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE THREE LABOR CONFEDERATIONS HAVE APPEARED IN THE PRESS IN THE PAST MONTH. THEY HAVE GENERALLY DEALT WITH TRADE UNION THEMES BUT SEVERAL HAVE BEEN DIRECT ATTACKS UPON THE GOE AND UPON THE MINISTER OF LABOR. ALSO, THEY HAVE INDICATED COOPERATIVE
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PLANNING FOR THE UPCOMING MAY DAY LABOR PARADE.

3. ON APRIL 19 A VICIOUS ATTACK ON JOSE CHAVEZ, CEOSL PRESIDENT, WAS PUBLISHED BY LUIS VILLACRES (CHAVEZ' PREDECESSOR) IN WHICH THE LATTER CLAIMED TO BE THE LEGITIMATE CEOSL PRESIDENT. ON APRIL 25 CTE AND CEDOC PUBLISHED A DECLARATION SUPPORTING CHAVEZ AGAINST VILLACRES.

4. DURING THE WEEK OF APRIL 17 THE SOVIET-LINE COMMUNIST ELECTORAL FRONT, FADI, PUBLISHED A DECLARATION SAYING THAT IT HAD BEEN PARTICIPATING IN THE PLANNING FOR THE MAY DAY PARADE WITH THE THREE CONFEDERATIONS AND THAT IT PLANNED TO MARCH WITH THE WORKERS. IN A CONVERSATION WITH POL/LABOFF CEOSL'S CHAVEZ DENIED THAT FADI WAS PARTICIPATING IN THE PARADE'S PLANNING AND PROMISED TO PUBLISH A DISCLAIMER. CHAVEZ ALSO DENIED THAT UNITY WITH THE OTHER CONFEDERATIONS WAS BEING REVIVED, EXPLAINED THAT THE RECENT JOINT DECLARATIONS WERE MERELY TACTICAL, AND SWORE THAT THERE WOULD BE NO JOINT PUBLICATIONS AFTER MAY 1. HE FURTHER ASSURED THAT CEOSL WOULD SHORTLY ENDORSE A NON-MARXIST PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE AND THEREBY CLEARLY DEMARCATHE HIS IDEOLOGICAL POSITION. HOWEVER, HE HAS THUS FAR NEITHER ISSUED THE DECLARATION NOR MADE THE ENDORSEMENT.

5. COMMENT: CHAVEZ IS AWARE THAT THE US IS CONCERNED ABOUT HIS JOINT ACTIVITY WITH THE COMMUNISTS BECAUSE OF THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE AIFLD PROGRAM WITH CEOSL. HE KNOWS THAT CONTINUED AIFLD SUPPORT FOR HIS ORGANIZATION IS DEPENDENT ON CEOSL'S BECOMING A CONVINCINGLY DEMOCRATIC LABOR ORGANIZATION. CHAVEZ' PROCRASTINATION IN DEFINING HIMSELF POLITICALLY HAS STRECHED HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH AIFLD TO THE BREAKING POINT. SHOULD HE FAIL TO DO SO IN THE NEAR FUTURE, WE WILL PROBABLY RECOMMEND THAT

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AIFLD DISENGAGE ITSELF FROM CEOSL UNTIL THE QUESTION OF ITS MARXIST ASSOCIATIONS CLARIFIES.

6. IN ALL FAIRNESS TO CHAVEZ, IT SHOULD BE REMARKED THAT HE FEELS HIMSELF BEING STRONGLY SQUEEZED BY THE GOE AT THE MOMENT. VILLACRES IS KNOWN TO BE FINANCED BY QUITO INDUSTRIALIST ANTONIO GRANDA CENTENO, OWNER OF EL TIEMPO AND CHANNEL 4. HE IS ALSO CLOSE TO THE MINISTER OF LABOR, COL (R) JORGE SALVADOR CHIRIBOGA, WHO HAS A PATHOLOGICAL DISLIKE FOR CHAVEZ. CHAVEZ BELIEVES THAT THE MINISTER OF LABOR ENCOURAGED AND FINANCED THE VILLACRES ATTACK AND THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT POSSIBLE. MINISTER SALVADOR HAS CONFIDED TO THE CHARGE THAT HE IS CONCERNED ABOUT CHAVEZ' ACTIVITIES WITH THE COMMUNIST CONFEDERATIONS AND THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO SUSPEND CEOSL'S LEGAL RECOGNITION.

7. WHEN CHAVEZ SPLIT WITH VILLACRES IN 1975 AND TOOK THE MAJORITY OF CEOSL'S UNIONS, HE BELIEVED HIMSELF VULNERABLE AND CULTIVATED THE CTE AND CEDOC, BELIEVING THAT THEIR RECOGNITION WOULD HELP HIM RETAIN HIS UNIONS AND ACHIEVE MINISTRY RECOGNITION. IN 1976 THE

MINISTRY RECOGNIZED THE CHAVEZ GROUP. PERHAPS BELIEVING
THAT HIS VERY EXISTENCE AS A LABOR LEADER IS THREATENED
BY THE VILLACRES ATTACK AND THE GOE'S HOSTILITY, HE MAY
BE RELUCTANT TO ABANDON HIS ERSTWHILE MARXIST COMPANIONS
AT THIS TIME. BE THAT AS IT MAY, THE EMBASSY BELIEVES
THAT A CLEAR NON-MARXIST DECLARATION WOULD UNDERCUT THE
MINISTER OF LABOR'S MACHINATIONS AND THAT HE WOULD BE
FORTIFIED BY CONTINUING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION WITH
AFL-CIO, ORIT, AND ICFTU. THE BALL IS NOW IN HIS COURT.
CORR

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Message Attributes

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